



Recommendation 1368 (1998)¹

Latest developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and the situation in Kosovo

Parliamentary Assembly

1. The latest political developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia – and in particular the situation in Kosovo – represent a threat to the stability of the country and of the Balkan region as a whole.
2. The Assembly reiterates its position expressed in [Recommendation 1360 \(1998\)](#) on the crisis in Kosovo and in [Resolution 1146 \(1998\)](#) on recent developments in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia and their implications for the Balkan region.
3. The Assembly is concerned about the growing influence of political extremists in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, as demonstrated by the participation of the Serb Radical Party of Mr Seselj in the new Serbian Government.
4. The continuing tensions in Montenegro should be resolved through political dialogue. The parliamentary elections in Montenegro, scheduled for 31 May 1998, will be an important indicator of respect for democratic standards.
5. The Assembly deplores the growing repression by the Yugoslav authorities of media that are trying objectively to report on the situation in Kosovo, namely the violence used by the police against the independent local media and foreign journalists covering events in Kosovo and the threats of legal prosecution.
6. The Assembly reaffirms its position that, without pre-judging the outcome of the negotiations, a long-term solution to the crisis in Kosovo can only be found on the basis of a mutually agreed solution. The Assembly believes that the solution could be greater autonomy for Kosovo, within a democratically reformed Federal Republic of Yugoslavia. Such autonomy should guarantee respect for the rights of all ethnic groups in Kosovo. The Assembly repeats its call for an immediate start to unconditional negotiations.
7. It welcomes the beginning of the implementation in Kosovo of the 1996 education agreement, which should contribute to a more favourable political climate for any future talks.
8. The Assembly welcomes the constitution of the delegation of the Serbian Government, which includes a special envoy of President Milošević, for talks with representatives of the Kosovo Albanian community. The delegation should be authorised to discuss solutions going beyond the existing Serbian Constitution. The international community should be represented at these talks.
9. The Assembly also welcomes the constitution of a negotiating team representing the Kosovo Albanian community. It should agree to open talks with the Belgrade authorities forthwith.
10. The Assembly reiterates its offer to assist in contacts between the Yugoslav authorities and representatives of the Kosovo Albanian community. The Council of Europe has considerable expertise in the relevant areas, such as human rights, minority rights, education and the media, which it could put at the disposal of the parties.

1. Assembly debate on 22 April 1998 (13th Sitting) (see [Doc. 8082](#), report of the Political Affairs Committee, rapporteur: Mr Bársony). Text adopted by the Assembly on 22 April 1998 (13th Sitting).



11. The Assembly considers that the referendum decided by the Serbian Parliament, following a proposal by President Milošević, on the acceptability of foreign mediation does not contribute to a solution to the Kosovo crisis. The Yugoslav authorities should comply with the requests of the international community, including the mission of Mr Felipe González on behalf of the OSCE and the European Union.
12. The Assembly fully endorses [Resolution 1160](#) of the United Nations Security Council on the crisis in Kosovo, adopted on 31 March 1998. In the light of the request by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia for membership of the Council of Europe, the Council of Europe should be included in consultations between the United Nations, the Contact Group, the OSCE and the European Union.
13. The Assembly takes note of the Yugoslav Government's request for Council of Europe membership of 18 March 1998. However, this request can only be considered if the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia respects the principles and values on which the Council of Europe is based, and complies with the requests of the international community, notably with regard to Kosovo.
14. The Assembly calls on the authorities of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia to:
 - 14.1. empower the delegation for talks with the Albanian Kosovo community to discuss all options for the autonomy of Kosovo within the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia;
 - 14.2. agree to the presence of a foreign representative or representatives to facilitate talks;
 - 14.3. comply with other requests of the international community concerning Kosovo and the democratic reforms in the country, as contained in the relevant documents of the United Nations, the OSCE, the European Union, the Contact Group and the Council of Europe
15. The Assembly calls on the leadership of the Kosovo Albanians:
 - 15.1. to condemn and do their utmost to prevent the use of violence and arms-trafficking;
 - 15.2. to enter into talks with the delegation of the Serbian Government and the special envoy of President Milošević.
16. The Assembly recommends that the Committee of Ministers:
 - 16.1. continue to deal with the situation in Kosovo as a matter of priority within the framework of its political dialogue;
 - 16.2. verify, in particular, the further implementation of the education agreement regarding Kosovo;
 - 16.3. examine, in close co-ordination with the United Nations, the OSCE, the European Union and the Contact Group, ways in which the Council of Europe could facilitate contacts and assist in talks between the Yugoslav authorities and the Kosovo Albanian community;
 - 16.4. call on both sides to ensure implementation of any agreement reached;
 - 16.5. decide on the follow-up to be given to the Yugoslav request for Council of Europe membership in the light of progress made by the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia authorities in complying with the requests by the international community, notably with regard to Kosovo
17. The Assembly resolves to remain actively seized on the issue and to send a delegation to visit Belgrade, Pristina and Podgorica as soon as possible